

Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant

Possible Worker Exposures

Workers may have been exposed to many hazardous substances, including but not limited to: radiation, uranium, neptunium, plutonium, technetium, nickel, fluorines, trichloroethylene, hydrofluoric acid, beryllium, asbestos and various chemicals. An independent Department of Energy safety and health investigation concluded that, until 1990, workers were not adequately informed of hazards at the site or given training on how to protect themselves from their possible health impacts.

Public Meetings on Worker Health and Benefits

A public meeting with the Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environment, Safety and Health Dr. David Michaels was held in August 1999, in Paducah, Ky. About 200 attended the meeting. Secretary Richardson held a town hall meeting in Paducah on September 16, 1999, where opened by saying, “on behalf of the United State Government, I am here to say I’m sorry.”

Important Contact Information

U.S. Department of Energy Workers’ Compensation Helpline (toll-free): **877-447-9756**

U.S. Department of Energy Benefits Website: <http://www.eh.doe.gov/benefits>

U.S. Department of Energy Paducah Investigation Report: <http://www.eh.doe.gov/oversight>

Site Background

The Department of Energy’s Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant opened in 1952 to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons. During the plant’s Cold War history, more than one million tons of uranium was processed. Uranium enriched at the site today is used as nuclear fuel in commercial power plants. The Paducah plant performs the first step in the uranium enrichment process, followed by further enrichment at the Ohio plant. The Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant is located on about 3,425 acres in McCracken County, Kentucky, almost 10 miles west of the city of Paducah and 3 miles south of the Ohio River.

Environmental Management and Integration Contractor:	Bechtel Jacobs Company, LLC
Lessee to U.S. Department of Energy:	United States Enrichment Corporation
Number of current contractor employees:	1,987 (estimated; includes 1,740 USEC employees)
Historical number of contractor employees:	10,000 (estimated)